

DEATH AND INSULT FOR AMERICANS IS SUGGESTED IN PROCLAMATION GIVEN OUT BY NICARAGUA'S RULER TO BLUEFIELD AGENTS

HEROES ARE DENIED HONORS IN DEATH

Americans Executed Without Being Allowed a Hearing.

(Continued from Fourth Page.)

him most to guess at his progress and to speculate as to his condition.

The home life of the two boys was different rather in appearance than in influence. Groce was the son and namesake of a doctor—"one of the really prominent physicians of Texas, until his retirement from active practice," telegraphed Mr. Warner. But the professional atmosphere of the home in Hempstead did not suffice to incline Leonard away from business, and it is not at all likely that this had found in his mother and father a training more earnestly and solidly founded in character than that which was given his mate, the butcher's son, up in Pennsylvania.

Groce Six Years Cannon's Senior.

Whether they hooked together their enterprises at first or kept in touch merely as friends does not appear from their letters. Each speaks of the other as of his own disposition. Groce was six years Cannon's senior and better able to oppose cunningly.

Cannon had a remarkable ability to produce results. It is easy to see them in the attitude pictured by him who met them in Panama.

Zelaya and his government proved unscrupulous soon after the American selection of the Panama route for the canal. We contracted by treaty for the present canal zone in November, 1903, but the location of the route was shown earlier and by the time of the bloodless revolution along the line of the old French excavations Cannon had become a prefect of police in Salvador, that tiny country tucked apparently in a pocket of the Nicaraguan state. Zelaya was then engaged in war with Honduras and he believed that the American police officer of Salvador was aiding his enemy. There is no indication that Groce fell at all under suspicion.

Two years later the Americans had money enough to be possessed of "estates." What the lands were or of what worth is unknown to their families. But the estimates are that the older man's investments had increased to a total of about \$100,000 and the younger man's nothing had become about \$20,000. The location was at the town of Masaya, which is perhaps twenty miles from Managua and Zelaya's palace. Then something happened which throws a great deal of light on the standing of at least one of the two. But we ought to hear of it from one who was almost an eye-witness:

Woman's Letter Narrates Bob's Exploits.

San Miguel, Central America.

Mrs. David K. Cannon:

Dear Madam—I take the liberty to address you. I have been writing to Miss N. Speck to try to find out the whereabouts of your son, Robert Lee Roy Cannon, who is an esteemed and much valued friend of my whole family. Miss N. Speck got cross and wrote me a sassy letter blaming us for Bob having got mixed up in Central American politics. But she made a big mistake that time. Bob has lots of dear Spanish friends from one end of Central America to the other. If you believe me this, we only knew Bob four days when he was arrested for being mixed up in Central American politics.

"About ten soldiers came in his house and beat him with their rifles until he fell to the floor bleeding from head, nose and mouth. He looked like a dead man (I thought he was dead). As quick as I could I took the bleeding head in my lap, washed, and gave him some stimulatives till he showed signs of life. Then we took the ropes from his arms and put him to bed.

"We reported it to the American consul, but they thought they could not help him. We all tried to save him. We went to Honduras, and just then war was declared against Nicaragua. All business was at a standstill. All talk was war was war, from morning till night. The outcome of it was Bob and my husband went. Honduras

"SHOOT A FEW YANKEES."

"The time for action has come. How can we expect to stir people of Nicaragua to show the necessity to drive our enemies and their American friends out at the point of the bayonet from our country unless we shoot a few Americans."—President Zelaya to his agents in Bluefield.

lost. Bob fled to Salvador. We went down to the Panama canal. Asks Help To Free Cannon.

"All the time we have been trying to keep track of Bob. He wrote seldom. Last evening we got a letter from Honduras from a Spanish young lady saying Bob had been in prison for many months. So now at last we have a clue. You will have to get your government to give him up, that is, if it won't be too late. In the Spanish countries they have to respect Uncle Sam. We can't do anything to help him. It is his parents' duty now to write to the War Department about it.

"I would be glad to have a letter from you as we are all very fond of your poor unfortunate boy. He was running the risk of his life so as to be able to make some money. He wanted so very much to go home for a visit, but he said he would never go without cash. This is the last straw now. We are all more than sorry that he is in such a fix. It is no fun to be in a prison in Central America. They all went to the war for gold. Some want need gold any more, some ran away, some got caught, and your Bob is one of the latter."

Later there came to the Cannons up in Harrisburg another letter in the same angular handwriting. It was even more to the point. Its entire text is comprehended in these few lines:

"Mr. and Mrs. D. K. Cannon: Your son, Robert Lee Roy Cannon, has been for several months a prisoner in Chilteuca, on the frontier of Nicaragua and Honduras. You will have to act quick before it is too late.

"Yours (very sorry),

"MRS. M. POETSCHBACH.

"December 1, 1908."

Hard To Follow Americans' Movements.

It is hard to follow the movements of the two Americans from this point. Groce drops from sight altogether. Cannon, who had survived the attack of the Nicaraguan soldiers, was ordered to leave the country and his plantation was confiscated. He would appear to have gone to Guatemala City, 900 miles from Greytown, to have written to friends in the United States as to entering civil suits for the recovery of his property near Masaya. In any event it is clear he undertook to cross the border, notwithstanding his exile, was captured and thrown into the prison which the German friend, Mrs. Poetschbach, writes "very sorry."

Promised Treatment As Prisoners of War.

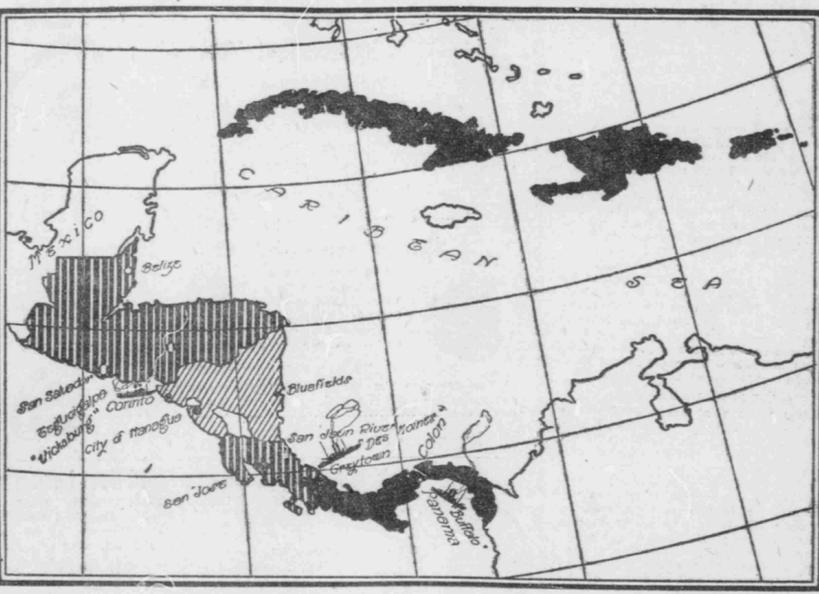
Cannon was taken October 21 by one of the steamers. It is said the commanding officer aboard promised him treatment as a prisoner of war. The search for Groce required until November 2. In the meantime Cannon had been thrown into an outhouse, held there twenty-four hours until nearly unconscious from the bad air, and taken to a prison nearer the capital. The two were tried by court-martial. According to the Nicaraguan representative now in Washington they confessed to having attempted to lay dynamite mines in the channel of the San Juan. Then they were led out into the prison yard, stood up as Maximilian had been made to stand, and shot to death by a squad of Zelaya's troops.

Make Terms To Leave the Country.

The program is usually this: To organize a company of infantry and seize the custom house just as a steamer enters the harbor. To collect the customs on that cargo. To use the money obtained for the purchase of arms and ammunition. To hide in the hills until the supplies arrive. To succeed against the government troops if possible, or falling in that to make the best terms possible and leave the country with the property collected by raid.

Estrada had followed this program without material change. He began his "revolution" with less than 100 men. It is probable he now has several

CENTRAL AMERICA AND WEST INDIES



THE AMERICAN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA, CUBA, SANTO DOMINGO, PORTO RICO, AND THE CANAL ZONE ARE SUBJECT TO THE CONTROL OF THE UNITED STATES OUTRIGHT. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NICARAGUAN SITUATION THREATENS TO MAKE THE SHADED SECTIONS ANOTHER PHILIPPINE DEPENDENCY.

thousand to oppose Zelaya's 4,000 men, more or less trained. And among his first accessions were these two Americans. Now they had a special value to Estrada. They were engineers. A part of the government's plan of campaign was to choke the River San Juan, the main stream of Nicaragua, the connecting link between the lake and the Atlantic, and the route of Zelaya's four steamers plying daily from San Juan de Norte to Granada.

Within a week of the beginning of hostilities the engineers had their details. Zelaya was on his guard. When Cannon had left the camp to spy out the best place to lay the mines, the natives of the party were surprised by government troops. Unoubtedly there was opportunity to capture some of the rebel Nicaraguans. But they were not the quarry Zelaya sought. With one American isolated somewhere in the underbrush along the river bank and the other nearer the camp there was little time to waste on natives.

Edict Criticizes Estrada and Americans.

"Estrada wishes to open the country to foreigners with his sword. His ambition is to place the country in the shameful condition of being reduced to slavery. It is better to die than to submit to being sold to foreign adventurers. All patriots must have their bayonets ready for use and to make the sound of their cannon strike fear in the breasts of Americans, foreigners wishing to buy your virgin forests."

But a new order had been adopted by the American Department of State. The era-of-good-feeling policy of Elihu Root had been superseded by something more vigorous. In the nine months of the Knox administration two policies had been unequivocally adopted. The one had no relevancy to this affront from Nicaragua; it was the readoption in full scope of the Hay principles of the open door in China and the maintenance of her integrity. But the first was a sign for Don Jose Santos Zelaya to read if he had his eyes open. It was: Full and complete protection for American citizens in their interests in Latin America.

Knox's Hand In Central America.

And in the furtherance of these two policies in these nine months, the Secretary of State has reorganized the department in his charge; compelled

Chile to arbitrate what is known as the Alsop claim; prevented the return to Venezuela of President Castro; induced American financiers to refund the debt of Honduras; initiated negotiations for the creation of a Latin American bank in New York; sought to obtain a share in the Hankow-Szechuan railroad loan from China.

Apparently the United States is now to proceed upon the theory that the only healthful Pan-American alliance must be based upon mutual respect among the nations and that governments which are stable, democratic, and honest—such as Brazil, Argentina, and Chile—will not be unwilling to have the governments of Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Venezuela classified by themselves.

The United States has something of a job on its hands to provide "full and complete protection for American citizens in Latin America." Contrast with the execution of Cannon and Groce this story of the citizens of another nation:

The superintendent of an English mine in Nicaragua noticed that the raids of the Indian robbers invariably followed the visit to his mine of Zelaya's inspector. So he struck a bargain with a native that the inspector be killed for \$100 in gold. The moment the official next appeared his head was blown off.

Zelaya did not take much stock in the report of the mine superintendent that the inspector had been killed from the brush. His answer was a detachment of troops to disarm the camp. The superintendent felt they might as well go home as give up their arms. So he gathered them in a round-house and threw the British flag over them.

"You have arms?" asked the commanding officer with a salute.

"We have—under that flag."

"Good morning!" with another salute.

Government Slow In Commanding Respect.

No government as slow as ours has been could hope for such respect for its flag. Furthermore, we have sent to the diplomatic and consular stations in Central America in times past certain of our citizens splendidly qualified to arouse dislike for us. Thus an American consul in one town when transferred abandoned his common-law wife and six children. Of seventy-six American residents of a single city in Honduras only ten dare return to the United States, and the richest of the sixty-six others is evading extradition for rape. The American consul and the French consular agent of another town prevailed on the governor to surrender to a rebel force outside which they swore numbered 5,000 men. When the besiegers marched in there were found to be precisely twenty-eight. But the great obstacle to respect for America and the American Government is to be found in the shadow which the Latin-American of these five nations sees all too clearly hovering in the sky—a foreign suzerainty.

Yet in the judgment of South American diplomats, of American investors, of officials of the United States, it is idle to try much longer to stave precisely such a suzerainty. Estrada does not promise substantial government for Nicaragua as protection of foreign property rights if he succeeds. Cuba has progressed almost to the hour when administered by the United States and retrograded almost to the hour when administered by Cubans. Santo Domingo, side by side with degraded Haiti, has advanced so rapidly in the four years of an American management of her finances that at the end of the remaining eleven years under the treaty it is almost inevitable her people should choose to continue the relation with the United States.

AWAIT IMPROVEMENTS AS IN SOUTH AMERICA.

And the existing situation of most of the Central American republics will not permit an indefinite waiting for things to improve as already they have improved in South America. Hear William Hill Hunt, an American agent for investors in these countries, a friend to their presidents, and an accomplished commercial diplomatist:

"In Nicaragua and Guatemala there is today such a state of oppression, abuses, and disregard of law as to present more need for intervention on the part of the United States than there was in Cuba. Some eight or nine months ago an effort was made to blow up Estrada Cabrera, president of Guatemala. After that his method of preventing further such efforts was to establish a censorship over the people coming into the country which required visiting women to be stripped entirely nude by male inspectors.

"There is, no doubt, some degree of security for foreign property in all the Central American republics, even in time of revolution, but the laws are so utterly disregarded in dealings between the government and its own citizens that the foreigner naturally feels something of the same insecurity.

Countries Ruled By Swashbucklers.

"These countries are ruled not by the producing, law-abiding element, but by a minority whose members are swashbucklers. If those who are law-abiding, intelligent, and progressive—and they are in the majority—could assert themselves without danger to their lives, an entirely different state of affairs would come into existence, an era of law, order, and progress would immediately begin."

This was the view which directed

AN EDICT OF THREATS.

"It is better to die than to submit to being sold to foreign adventurers. All patriots must have their bayonets ready for use and to make the sound of their cannon strike fear in the breasts of American foreigners wishing to buy our virgin forests."—Zelaya in proclamation dated October 20, 1909.

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VIGOROUS ACTION IS KNOX'S POLICY

He Has Attempted Much Toward Protection of American Subjects.

America's hand to Santo Domingo. It was the view which led Theodore Roosevelt to plan, up to the inauguration of his successor, for the similar taking over of the customs house of Honduras. More significant still it is the view which moved Secretary Knox to invite the banking house of Drexel, Morgan & Co. to purchase the bonded indebtedness of Honduras, formerly held in England.

Likely To Force Honduras.

As the protector of these new American rights, the United States may interfere in the government of Honduras to compel the payment of interest on the debt, and the right to compel the payment of interest with it. The right to see that such conditions prevail as will make it possible to pay such interest. In other words the United States has already opened the door to enter Honduras.

The attitude of the American department of foreign affairs is that no one must whisper intervention. The whole range of lesser measures must be tried first—blockade, the elimination of particularly unworthy leaders like Castro, Zelaya, and Cabrera, and patient conference. But there is no prospect that these will serve better in Central America than in Santo Domingo.

Once, about five years ago, the nations undertook themselves to improve matters. They met in Costa Rica—with Salvador easily the best governed of the group—and agreed upon a far-sighted plan for renewing the old confederation and forming a single, trustworthy, permanent government. They even chose the site for the capital at Siguatepeque in Honduras. But the whole project failed when they reached the selection of the first president. The delegates from each separate nation represented demanded the election of their chief.

Nations Gather For Federation Again.

They meet again, these nations, in June of 1910 in what new relationship they will come together none of us can tell. The curtain, though lifted a little by these American boys, has not yet let in the light so far. Every dark effort must be let in—into every dark ravine in Central America; into every thieving government there; into the corroded heart of every ruthless despot of life and spirit. When that shall come, whether this year, or next, or a generation hence, the light will be seen to shine through a lens held forward in the hands of two young soldiers of fortune as they fell—in the court yard of a prison in Nicaragua, at 10 in the morning of November 12.

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